

Enhancing forest beauty

Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry



Most landowners place a high value on the beauty of their woods. The natural beauty of the forest can be enhanced. Wildlife/ timber management can contribute by increasing diversity and interest.

Variety (many species and ages of trees, contrasting stands, openings.) Diversity in vegetation also promotes diversity in wildlife.

- Conduct small timber harvests using different techniques: small "clear-cuts" (all species), two-age cutting (oak), single tree harvest (sugar maple)
- Plant trees and shrubs, including some evergreens
- Leave snags and den trees
- Leave trees along streams and bluffs
- Maintain small food plots
- Create gradual transitions from forest to openings

Special features, points of interest: ponds, springs, streams, wildlife observation blinds, old house sites, cemeteries, bluffs, caves, shady coves, open park-like stands, overlooks, vistas, big interesting trees.

- Leave trees near water
- Build trails for access
- Install park benches
- Locate wildlife viewing points at forest edges and streams
- Fertilize, lime and remove competitors around selected trees to increase their growth;
- Develop park-like stands by favoring maple, beech, basswood and white pine (on good sites); prune branches (to 17' to increase timber value); under-burn pine stands

"Placeness" and privacy.

- Plant hedges, (especially curving evergreen hedges)
- Maintain contrasting types of forest and openings
- Lay out curving trails that lead from one "place" to another
- Locate trails and roads along boundaries between different types of vegetation to accentuate their differences
- Build "places" around special features
- Use converging and diverging lines of vegetation along trails to draw attention into and out of the woods, or to a feature.
- Use terrain features: hilltops, north slope in summer, south slopes in winter

Special places are a key to enjoying your forest. You can enjoy them while reaping the benefits of more intensive management (wildlife habitat improvement, timber production, leasing) elsewhere on your property.

Wildflowers

- Many species will colonize if their habitat is provided.
- Native wildflowers can be planted in appropriate sites.
- Threatened and endangered (T&E) plants should be purchased *only from a nursery with a T&E license.*
- Bogs and streamsides sometimes harbor unusual wildflowers.

Plant favorite trees, shrubs and flowers around ponds, clearings, along trails and near park benches.

Trees with spring flowers: redbud, dogwood, sourwood, catalpa, paulownia, serviceberry, tulip poplar, crabapple, hawthorn, buckeye, yellowwood, black locust, red maple.

Fall color: ash, blackgum, poplar, sassafras, sugar maple, red maple, pignut hickory, dogwood, sourwood, sumac and sweetgum; oak varies considerably. Pine resin adds fragrance to fall air.

Winter: holly, pine, cedar, hemlock (green, windbreaks); crabapple, hawthorn, dogwood (berries) sycamore (bark, fruit), sassafras and other trees with interesting branches

Where timber is harvested:

- Clear harvest only small areas.
- Consider creating a two-age stand.
- Plan and flag in roads and skid trails to minimize damage to soil and residual trees.
- Cut low stumps.
- Mark "bumper trees" at bends in skid trails to protect other trees as logs are dragged past (remove the bumper trees last.)
- Chop or pile logging debris. Piles of branches provide cover for wildlife.
- Leave trees along roads, ponds, springs and streams. Trees left along roads can be cut after new trees have grown.
- Grade and re-vegetate roads and skid trails.
- Don't log when the soil is wet
- Mark anything you want left or protected.
- Specify all protection measures in a logging contract.
- Choose a logger with a good reputation.
- Mule logging and feller/buncher machines might disturb the ground less than conventional skidders. Ask your consulting forester.

After one growing season, the harvest site will be covered with natural seedlings.

For more information, see
www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/forest_resources/desktop/woodscaping

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